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ABSTRACT

This article is based on an in-depth qualitative study which focuses on past and current faculty hiring practices in the community college system. It represents a comprehensive approach, including a review of literature, evaluation of practices across community college systems, and informal interviews with faculty and administrators about the hiring process at their institutions. The authors address issues of impending faculty retirements, effectiveness of hiring practices, and replacement of full-time faculty with adjunct instructors. The article argues that many of the faculty due to retire were hired at a time when the concept of college instruction was more aligned with public schools and the university model than with the learning-centered community college mission of the present. The traditional hiring process has not kept pace with changes in the institution. The authors contend that the interview process is one of the most problematic areas in current hiring practices. Interviewers must clearly define institutional missions, and interviewees must be able to clearly discuss their personal values. Innovative approaches to hiring begin with development of meaningful criteria and job descriptions, as well as offering comprehensive orientation programs for new faculty, and even performance-based hiring. (Contains 18 references.) (NB)

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An Exploration of Hiring Practices in Community Colleges

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ABSTRACT

This article is based on an in-depth qualitative study which focuses on past and current faculty hiring practices in the community college system. It represents a comprehensive approach, including a review of literature, evaluation of hiring practices across community college systems, and informal interviews with faculty and administrators about the hiring process at their institutions. The authors limit this study to the modern community college (early 1960s) and in doing so identify some of the common trends in the hiring of faculty and subsequent issues that have emerged related to past hiring practices. This study suggests that during the 1960s and 1970s most community college faculty members were hired with little emphasis on past experiences or demonstrated instructional effectiveness and that often it was a matter or being at the right place, at the right time, or knowing the right person that made a difference in whether or not a particular individual was hired. The hiring process was void of a systematic and comprehensive process needed to ensure that the candidate selected was the best fit for the institution.

The authors found that currently there are some community college systems which are pursuing innovative approaches to the hiring process. However, little information exists related to the history or effectiveness of hiring practices in the community college system and the authors recommend that further research be conducted to better understand how hiring decisions are made and what the ultimate result of these decisions are on the institution both in terms of organizational and financial health.

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An Exploration of Hiring Practices in Community Colleges

Suzanne Flannigan, Barbara Jones, William Moore, Jr.

August 19, 2003

An Exploration of Hiring Practices in Community Colleges

...one day, the way we have hired people will come back to haunt us...

Joseph P. Cosand

Introduction

With the average age of faculty members exceeding 55, it is expected that "large numbers of community college faculty may retire at virtually the same time and in the near future." (Gahn & Twombly, 2001) In the wake of their exodus, it is a reasonable assumption that community colleges will be faced with hiring many new full- and part-time faculty members within the same time frame.

Add to this that so far, the authors have found little information exists regarding the effectiveness of hiring practices, specifically related to the hiring of faculty in community colleges. Past and current practices represent somewhat amorphous processes with little internal consistency among various stages of decision-making. Considering the probable turnover in full-time faculty, and their subsequent replacement, in many cases, by adjuncts, community college leaders must respond to the challenges, both inherent and learned, in the hiring process to ensure quality instruction in light of diminishing legislative support, and in light of the significant and long-term financial obligation the institution makes with the hiring of each new faculty member.

Critical events in history have impacted the community college system; namely, the mass hiring in the 1960s of the faculty who will be retiring in the next few years. Many of them, predominately white males, began their careers at the same time that community colleges first opened their doors. They were hired quickly and with little consideration or demonstration of ability. These pioneers transitioned into community college faculty jobs from secondary schools,

from vocational fields, from behind the pulpit, or directly from a master's program from a four-year institution. Their concept of college instruction is more aligned with the public schools and university model than with the origins of the junior college, or the innovative, learning-centered community college of the future.

Many of these individuals are now approaching retirement and this will create a vast shortage of qualified faculty needed to respond to growing student populations. How will community college hiring practices ensure that new faculty members are able to appreciate the culture of the past while at the same time embrace the vision of the future? This study seeks to address the current hiring practices for community college faculty. It will highlight some of the challenges in that process, including discrimination against diverse populations, and, it will suggest why changes are needed.

This review of the faculty hiring processes for community colleges leads the authors to believe that there is a widely used but not standard process in place including: announcement of faculty position, initial screening of applications, interviewing format and process, and final selection of top candidate. There are, however, concerns about the efficacy of this process (e.g., Murray 1999, Rafes 2001, Van der Vorm 2001, Fowler-Hill 2002, Hecht 2002, Hammons 2003). Search committees do an adequate job of screening applications, narrowing the applicant pool and adhering to institutional policies needed to ensure an equitable process, considering that there is still the realization that "women and members of racial-ethnic minorities are underrepresented in higher education." (Gillett-Karam, Roueche, Roueche 1991) However, by admission, search committees and experts alike indicate that the interview process is not ideal and does not provide them with the quality and depth of investigation they need in order to determine the best 'fit' for both the college and the faculty member. (e.g., Murray 1999, Rafes

2001, Van der Vorm 2001, Fowler-Hill 2002, Hecht 2002, Hammons 2003). "Volkman noted that university consultant Arthur Ciervo once said, 'The basic difficulty of the interview, as usually conducted, is that it involves making extensive inferences from limited data obtained in artificial situations by unqualified observers.'" (Murray, 1999) Furthermore, there is little evidence of progress toward improving the search and screening process which would result in enhancing time and cost efficiencies and ensuring confidence in the fit between faculty and the mission and values of the institution.

The historic and traditional approach of defining expected requirements and desired credentials, combined with interview questions that allow the candidate to elaborate on experiences and best and worst personality characteristics, will certainly result in the hiring of a capable faculty member well versed in the discipline for which he or she was hired. However, it is difficult to ascertain whether this individual possesses the ingenuity and passion needed to transcend traditional modes of instruction and provide new avenues for engaging community college students in the learning process. It also begs the question of whether the faculty member 'fits' within the value structure of the given institution.

Some institutions are looking for alternatives – looking for other ways of hiring and recruiting in order to improve the process. Some are turning toward performance-based selection that will hopefully save time, decrease cost, and result in a faculty member who will successfully contribute to the fulfillment of the college's purpose. Others are looking to variations on storytelling and past-to-present behavior models to find a faculty member who 'fits' with the college mission and vision. (Murray, 1999) Still others are grappling with issues of diversity and how to make the interview process more sensitive to the differences among candidates. (e.g., Rafes, 2001, Van der Vorm, 2001) So what methods currently exist, and are there enough

fundamental differences among them to be able to categorize them according to their anticipated outcomes? As indicated in the remainder of this paper, it appears that while there are adaptations to the traditional process, there is little true innovation or difference in the process and the outcomes and therefore little on which to base categorization.

As an added note, the literature which supports this paper is comprehensive in identifying what is most commonly practiced. It does not cover the anomalies (either positive or negative) of the hiring process to the degree the authors believe it must eventually be done. This study does, however, provide a thorough exploration of what is practiced most commonly in the field right now. It also provides a reference point for what does not exist commonly in the system.

Methodology

In developing this piece, the writers assume an interpretive perception of social reality, in that data are collected related to the reality of the community college milieu. Depending primarily on qualitative data, the authors assimilated their own experiences, as both administrators and faculty, with analysis of data from community colleges' human resource web pages, correspondence via e-mail and literature review. Due to limitations related to the history of hiring practices during the 1960s and 1970s, as indicated in the supporting literature, and the lack of research information associated with current practices, the authors depended on informal anecdotal information collected from full-time faculty and administrators who were hired during the late 1960s or early 1970s. Information gained from an informal interview with a former chancellor and founder of a large multi-campus community college brought much depth and breadth to this effort.

Using convenience sampling, initial research consisted of a review of community colleges' web pages, including job postings, job descriptions, applications and application

process, and was augmented by e-mail correspondence with selected colleges' Human Resource (HR) departments. This allowed the researchers to identify common themes related to current faculty hiring processes as evidenced by both a review of literature and actual practice.

The researchers also conducted secondary research which included the development of a bibliography of sources related to hiring practices in community colleges. Given the limited writing that has been done on this subject in the last 50 years, secondary research focused mostly on articles written for various journals, periodicals and college/university publications. Although there is a vast discipline associated with hiring practices in general, especially related to business and human resource management, there was nonetheless little specifically related to the process in the community college. No books were found that focused on hiring practices in community colleges, although there were books which devoted part or all of a given chapter to the topic. This lack of available research leaves the authors both concerned and intrigued. Is it possible that there just is not much written about this topic? And, if so, why? Or, are there avenues as yet untapped by the authors that will, in fact, net a greater pool of information and knowledge?

Assumptions

The authors approached their project guided by certain assumptions. The first is that the present hiring process does not work entirely because the important qualities that faculty must possess are not defined or understood by the hiring committee, the instructional administrators or, in many cases, the leadership within the given community college. Even if the qualities are articulated, they are frequently not used as criteria in the actual hiring process. And, if there is a desire to use them, there is no method for blending them into the current processes.

A second assumption was that some of the current hiring practices have come from industry and other sectors which have different requirements and reasons for hiring and

therefore, because they were not designed for education, do not effectively address or meet the needs of the community college system.

Research indicates that a community college spends over three million dollars on the career of one faculty member (Hammons, 2003). This is a significant investment. In addition, there is growing demand from local, state and national entities to ensure accountability and to prove the extent to which learning takes place. In times of limited funding and dwindling resources, it is no longer plausible for community college policy makers to commit such a large investment without substantial evidence that the faculty member is a good fit in the institution and will prove a valuable long-term investment.

As the research shows, certain limitations became apparent, including but not limited to, the fact that 1) inadequate research and only a few studies have been conducted on the subject of faculty hiring practice; 2) it is difficult gathering information regarding hiring practices from community college administrators; and, 3) unions resist change in the hiring process as do faculty.

In addition, a review of the literature relating to faculty hiring practices in community colleges has netted negligible results. And, what there is in terms of process content relating to the hiring practices appears to be similarly replicated across the American community college system. While there are pockets of differing hiring practices, the writers found a relatively homogeneous rendering of the processes that are currently used. Notwithstanding, a look back was useful in this process.

The Early Years

With the advent of the true community college in the 1950s and 1960s there appears to have been no formal development of hiring practices for community college faculty as evidence

by a lack of research on the subject. What has changed as a result of economic, social and competitive factors is the reason for which community college faculty is hired. The boom-like wave of hiring in community colleges which opened up after World War II in response to the depression, the GI Bill, and the Truman Commission (established in 1946 to answer questions about the organization of higher education needed to serve the returning veterans, as well as responding to the influx of large numbers of students into higher education) led the shift away from research toward teaching. Because of the great need for faculty, specifically during the 1960s, many were hired in a very informal manner. According to Gleazer (1968) there was a need for an estimated 10,000 faculty members annually. Faculty in the community college were not hired based on their research skills or their credentials necessarily. They came primarily from secondary school, or straight from Universities with a master's level degree to meet the great demand for college faculty. As reported in his book *This is the Community College*, Gleazer indicates that "Reports from Florida show that in 1964-1965, of every hundred new community college teachers, thirty-six came from the graduate schools of the universities, fourteen from college and university teaching, twenty-seven from high school teaching, and ten from a business occupation." (Gleazer, 1968) They moved into the position as faculty member in a community college, in many cases, as an alternative to their previous position.

Conversations with some of these faculty members indicate that often a handshake extended at a conference or social gathering represented a hiring agreement. Other individuals were approached and subsequently hired based on articles or books they had written and published (that is how one of the authors was first hired at a community college). In most cases, the advice or consent of the existing faculty was frequently not obtained when filling a new

position. Any audit of the hiring practices and procedures during the 1960s and 1970s will reveal that these two elements were ad-hoc, nepotistic and indiscriminate.

In the1960s massive hiring took place, with what appears to have been little formal process. Research conducted by Gahn & Twombly (2001) suggests that there is very little information about the community college labor market, and even community college scholars have written very little about this. During the rapid growth that occurred in the 1960s, some research was conducted related to the struggle of community colleges to fill administrative and faculty positions. The findings indicate that there was a "trend toward hiring administrators from within the two-year college world rather than outside". (e.g., Wing, 1971 as cited in Twombly & Gahn, 2001). While there is very little written about the specific hiring practices at the time, what has been written about this period in the history of the community college is that it was pretty much a free-for-all in hiring. According to Bromert (1984), "anecdotal evidence indicates that many people were chosen through informal systems, which often included "old boy" networks."

Opening at a rate of more than one per week, according to Brint & Karabel, authors of The Diverted Dream (1989), community college enrollment escalated with the arrival of the baby-boom generation in the 1960s. A 1971 analysis conducted of the enrollments in two-year institutions of higher education as a percentage of total undergraduate education revealed the extent of this growth. The most significant findings were in California which had a growth ratio of 61.2 percent. Commensurate with this growth rate was a need to hire large numbers of faculty in a short period of time; therefore, many institutions relied on word-of-mouth recommendations to recruit faculty. There was no formal search and screening process. Some colleges used a small committee, usually consisting of the president, vice president and dean, while other colleges took a less structured approach, depending primarily on the whims of the president who

often only required one, sometimes informal, interview with the prospective candidate. One faculty member hired during this period related his experience as follows: "In 1970 I was at the [u]niversity . . . and saw a "3X5" card that said: "Interviews for faculty positions . . . I had an interview with (the president) and after 2 or 3 minutes in the interview, he asked me if I'd like a job . . ." Another faculty member recalled that "(I) hand delivered my application to (president's office). (The president) hired me. There were no committees or other persons involved."

Faculty hired at most community colleges during the 1960s represented the baby boomer generation. These individuals were often from lower socio economic environments and as with most baby boomers, held beliefs of entitlement without consequence. "They were precocious, quickly learning about academic insularity and autonomy and how these elements provided them with a kind of academic sovereignty over their professional lives that they had never had." (Moore, 2003) They did not bring to their faculty positions a wealth of college teaching or research, but rather obtained positions with minimum requirements, gaining knowledge as needed on the job. For some of these new faculty, race secured them a position; for others, it guaranteed exclusion.

African American applicants from historically black colleges and universities were often more prepared in that their educational requirements which included competencies in two foreign languages, knowledge of statistical applications and an in-depth understanding of the historical and theoretical relevance of their subject matter. Additionally, they were better prepared to understand and respond to the needs of diverse populations. Many of these individuals were identified as unqualified and subsequently turned away from faculty jobs at community colleges. (Moore, 2003)

If it was true that most of the white faculty members hired during the 1960s and 1970s did not understand the origin and mission of the community college and the needs of its diverse populations, then this is still true today, especially considering that these same faculty still reside in classrooms across the nation. Additionally, as Moore indicated in his manuscript, Behind the Open Door, Joseph P. Cosand, the founding president of the Saint Louis Community College District, was prophetic when he once said of the early hiring practices, "one day, the way we have hired people will come back to haunt us. It has been my experience that those who have had an easy time themselves will make it difficult for those who follow." To be sure, the early hiring of faculty was almost a random process, as Roueche and Roueche (1993) have noted: "There was a mix of faculty who had little or no teaching experience with those who had years, a mix of faculty notions about the characteristics of community college students, and a mix of faculty attitudes about the students."

The early years of the community college represented a time when hiring practices, even though mostly unstructured, excluded minority faculty from joining the ranks. "In some community colleges one cannot find a single person of color who is a faculty member." Furthermore, ". . . the hiring practices, from the beginning to the present, have been a failure and, for person of color, a disaster." (Moore, 2003) As the authors will address later in this study, this continues to be one of the major barriers to ensuring an equitable and effective hiring process today.

Emphasis on the credentials is still very apparent in many hiring processes, and is strongly reminiscent of the early colleges, and the focus on scholarly development rather than teaching ability or student orientation. Yet, it does not appear to serve the colleges well. "The traditional approaches community colleges have used to recruit and select faculty based

primarily upon credentials will not meet the challenges of the future." (Fowler-Hill, 2002) Unfortunately, credentials provide almost no sense of the ability of the person to perform and almost no sense of the 'fit' between faculty member and institution.

During the 1970s and 1980s, faculty hiring processes began to focus on or to structure qualifications needed to teach at a community college. What was true then is true today – there continues to be a heavy focus on the credentials in all programs except vocational programs where it seemed that experience was often more significant and desirable than a degree. New faculty members rarely had to perform a teaching demonstration or provide any other evidence of effective instruction. Because they came from educational institutions or business organizations, they were unaware of the culture of a community college, ". . . nor had they been exposed to the discipline of study imposed by the high standards of their academic predecessors in those early two-year institutions. . ." (Moore, 2003)

Another significant development in the hiring process in the 1980s and 1990s was the tendency toward sometimes fierce competition for faculty positions. The process was never specifically designed for the community college needs, and because the process was often not carried out in a systematic, consistent and fair way, a more legalistic approach to hiring was born. Rather than develop a new approach, institutions became more careful with the one they had hoping that this would address the problem. (Rafes, 2001) Checking references became more formal as a way of checking a person's background and credentials.

While this did not address the fundamental gaps within the hiring process, it was an attempt to get at 'what the person was like' through the reference check, and it was also a way to appear fair through the verification of credentials and previous employment. Because of the legal implications, and the rising number of people suing because of what was perceived as

unfair practice, many institutions began to include lawyers in their hiring processes, making the processes that much more legalistic and prescriptive. Additionally, minorities and women were working to achieve both recognition and inclusion, while the historic pattern of hiring had always defaulted to white, Anglo-Saxon men, and the practices mostly reinforced those requirements. The minorities and the women had no recourse but to claim discrimination and in some cases, move forward with legal claims.

This legal focus entrenched the interview process by adding a legalistic and prescriptive spin to everything in the process which had the tendency to not serve most applicants with the exception of the legalistic ones who then came into the college and promoted the same kind of philosophy regardless of what the institution valued.

Current Hiring Practices

Today, it appears that hiring practices within community colleges follow a very similar pattern. Murray (1999), Rafes (2001), Van der Vorm (2001), Fowler-Hill (2002), Hecht (2002) and Hammons (2003) all provide similar messages in their writings. The hiring process includes a step-by-step approach. One of the first steps involves recruitment of qualified applicants through a variety of methods not limited to, but including posting an advertisement internally and/or externally, word-of-mouth, networks, head hunters, etc.

Typically, another step is the true beginning of the hiring process, when the selection committee meets and determines a process for screening the candidates. Search committees and processes can be implemented in such a way as to increase overall effectiveness. "If hiring is carried out in a haphazard, chaotic manner, the results can be disastrous." (Bromert 1984) A standing committee is not used in most colleges; rather, hiring committees are ad hoc with representation primarily consisting of faculty with other committee members including

department chairs or academic deans. Rarely are these committee members trained in the process. (Hammons, 2003) A review of the hiring practices at eight community colleges selected at random reveals a standard and predictable screening process where candidates are rated based on credentials, experience, skills and response to interview questions. As indicated above, most committees do not receive prior training related to the types of questions that should be asked to more accurately predict success and fit between faculty and institution. If training does occur, it is usually focused on procedures and policy.

Rafes (2001) points out that "...it is vital that institutions and their representatives remain within acceptable legal boundaries when carrying out required duties." To do this, committee members need training in the screening and the interviewing process. He goes on to add that "If not conducted properly, in strict accordance with the law, each step of the employment processes is a potential threat to the institution. Careful attention is required." Hammons makes a similar statement in that using untrained people in the hiring process is like using untrained people to make critical decisions...in this case a decision worth $3 million to the institution, per faculty member. (Hammons, 2003)

Although not included as a step in all hiring processes, testing is one element that is often included as part of the screening process. "Any testing involved during the screening process should be approved by the institution's human resources department to ensure compliance with the law." (Rafes, 2001) At the same time, reference and history checks are often done at this point. The challenge here is that "Failing to check references can lead to negligent hiring, a cause of action that makes the institution liable for hiring an individual with a dangerous background who injures a third person". (Rafes, 2001)

Following the screening process, the interview process is perhaps the most problematic of the steps in hiring faculty and yet, "Despite the disappointing results of numerous empirical studies, the candidate interview remains the most important hurdle for the successful candidate to jump and often the key component in the hiring decision for administrators because there appears to be no viable alternative selection process." (Murray, 1999)

Furthermore, Fear (1984) has postulated that the reason researchers have been unable to validate the interview as a selection tool is that "most interviews, in the hands of untrained interviewers, are little more than surface discussions – discussions that seldom reveal what a person is like deep down inside". The good news is that there "appears to be general agreement that good interviewing can and should be taught" (Kaplowitz, 1986) (Murray, 1999)

While the interview process remains one of the challenges in the hiring process for the institutions, it is also one for the candidates. Van der Vorm (2001) highlights how important it is for the candidates to clearly understand their own motives and values in applying for the faculty position. "Is the person a good fit for the organization? …it is usually assessed by whether an individual's values seem consistent with those of the campus". In order to attempt to find a good 'fit' between the institution and the faculty member, both must be honest and clear about their values in order to see if the 'fit' truly does exist.

If candidates fail to recognize the importance of conveying their personal values, their candidacy should be questioned. Likewise, if the search committee fails to clearly define the institutional missions, or fails to ask questions of candidates and their references about the candidates' values, the odds are greatly increased for an unsuccessful search. (Van der Vorm, 2001)

An additional step in the hiring process is the offer of the position to the successful candidate and the delivery of the news to the unsuccessful candidates. Once the successful candidate has been determined, in general he/she is contacted as soon as possible to ensure his/her interest in the position and to provide him/her with the opportunity to consider the offer. "The supervisor must document what he or she has done," and "The supervisor should avoid promising the new employee, either orally or in writing, any extra benefits, additional salary, relocation costs, or other perks that have not been previously authorized". (Rafes, 2001) The remaining candidates are typically not contacted until the college has had confirmed acceptance by the successful candidate.

As for those to whom the position is not offered, Rafes explains that no one considers himself or herself anything less than the best applicant for the job. Anything the employer can do to help these individuals feel less rejected reduces the chance of a potential lawsuit. (Rafes, 2001)

The hiring process is not ideal and this begs a daunting question, especially when "...the impending possibility of losing nearly 50% of the full-time faculty coupled with the predicted growth in enrollments (Miller, 1997) means that community colleges will be hiring large numbers of new faculty members". (Murray, 1999)

Fowler-Hill (2002) has suggested that "As new benchmarks for success are established by community colleges, improving the faculty and staff selection process will be one of many necessary steps in the development of a learning-centered environment." It is clear that seminal work needs to be done on the hiring process within the community college system.

Organizational theorist W. Richard Scott (1992) notes that people can learn about the methods in which organizations manage their "boundaries" by determining the extent to which

they hire from outside the system. He suggests that if employers want a good fit, "we need to know what positions exists, how they are connected, and what rules are employed for sorting workers among them."

In truth, faculty hiring practices have changed little since the majority of community colleges opened their doors in 1960. Evolving from the university system, the processes are often not suited for the unique culture of a community college.

There is a relationship between the assumptions stated in this study as well as the review of literature. The authors previously suggested that specific criteria related to identifying qualities or characteristics of an applicant are not inherent in the hiring process. In most cases, and in all of the community colleges reviewed for this paper, the authors found an homogeneous selection process, including the use of standard job descriptions; advertisements limited to the web, local newspapers, and Chronicle of Higher Education; an emphasis on credentials and experience as qualifying factors; use of ad hoc hiring committees; committee training limited to review of policy and procedures; and, use of traditional interview questions designed to gather additional information about experiences and credibility, rather than performance or behavioral characteristics. Only one college surveyed included a teaching demonstration as a requirement commensurate with the hiring process.

Another assumption of this study was that the mass hiring of faculty at community colleges during the 1960s happened with very little structure or in some cases, the non-existence of a hiring process. Of the faculty interviewed who were hired during the late 1960s and early 1970s, only two experienced a structured process whereby they were interviewed by a committee and then a dean or college president. Most faculty members were appointed because they knew someone in the community college system, or they submitted an application or made a phone call

at a serendipitous time. And, all respondents were white – mostly male. The following represents some anecdotal comments received from these faculty:

> *. . . a couple of us (employed at other colleges in the district) were asked to consider moving to one of the new colleges. . . the new announced President. . . asked . . . who would be interested to come for an interview. I was the only DS (developmental studies) person and after five minutes he said that he would recommend that I move to (the new college)*
>
> *I did have a contact . . .who was a friend of mine from graduate school . . . He encouraged me to apply for a History opening in the spring of 1972.*
>
> *I interviewed with the dean . . . about fifteen seconds into the interview, she received a very important phone call. After hanging up, she apologized and said she had to leave to take care of an urgent issue. She glanced at my resume and said, "this looks good", and I began my career.*

In an informal conversation with a former Chancellor of a community college district it was made apparent that during the 1960s there was an abundance of support, both financial and other for the hiring of new faculty. Many talented and experienced faculty members were recruited from local public school districts. In addition, the district secured a faculty recruiter who traveled across the country in pursuit of qualified and interested faculty. Many hiring decisions were made independent of a committee; individuals were sought who mirrored the vision and goals of the presidents or chancellor. Often the interviews and negotiations were informal and brief. This was necessary considering the limited time available prior to opening the college's doors. On the one hand, this expediency was perceived as necessary considering

the limited time available prior to opening the college's doors. On the other hand, it was also advantageous as it allowed people to be 'hand-picked' and placed.

What's Next?

During the review of literature, research of community college human resources web pages, as well as a review of other information related to hiring practices, the authors did identify examples of innovative approaches being implemented to respond to needed changes in the selection process. These methods encompass all aspects of the hiring process, beginning with developing meaningful criteria and job descriptions, to comprehensive orientation programs for new faculty. They are currently few and far between.

Although there are pockets of innovation throughout the nation with regard to hiring practices, and some community colleges have embraced the concept of performance based hiring, current practices are not meeting the changing needs of the community college system. New perspectives on hiring practices need to be developed in order to address the significant hiring wave that will occur within the next five to ten years (the mean age of faculty college faculty in 1995 was 47 years of age).

In conclusion, the intent of this study has been to review the historical trends in hiring and to highlight the limitations of the current hiring practices within the community college system against the wave-like backdrop of faculty retirements, expanding student enrollments and changing dimensions within the community college system as a whole. New approaches will have to be developed and applied over the next ten years to 'get at' the elements that make a faculty member a good 'fit' within a system that is ever-changing, dynamic and diverse.

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